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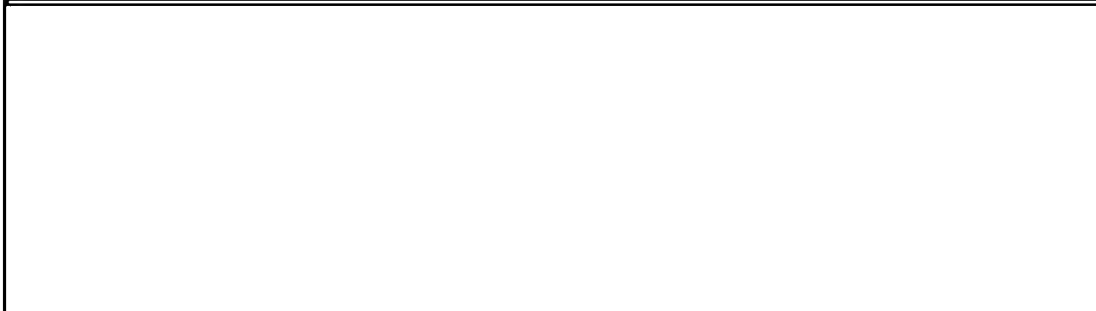
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NICARAGUA: Somoza's desire for modern jets (Page 12)



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NOTES

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NICARAGUA: President Somoza has evidenced a strong interest in obtaining modern jet aircraft. In an emotional outburst before visiting US military officers recently, the President expressed anger at the US for supplying A-37 jets to Guatemala. He said that because the US would not give Nicaragua jets, he had already decided to purchase them elsewhere. Somoza has never formally requested A-37s, and this statement may signal a future intention to do so. There is currently no evidence that an approach has been made to other countries, but Somoza is interested in the Mirage jets, and he may shop in Europe if he cannot obtain what he wants from the US, particularly as he is being pressed by his air force leaders to modernize the air force.

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